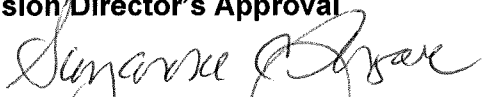


<b>Title</b> Lost and Found—Cedar River Watershed	<b>Number</b> WTR-650.1	<b>Rev. no.</b> 0
<b>Responsibility</b> Watershed Services Division	<b>Supersedes</b> N/A	<b>Pages</b> 3
<b>Division Director's Approval</b> 	<b>Effective Date</b> March 10, 2014	

# 1. PURPOSE

This procedure establishes the standard process for Watershed Services Division staff for handling lost and found items. It is the objective of the Watershed Services Division to handle personal items found at publicly accessible areas within the administrative boundaries of the Cedar River Municipal Watershed in a way that protects and respects personal property.

# 2. SCOPE

The City of Seattle owns, with Seattle Public Utilities managing, the publicly-accessible lands in the Cedar River Municipal Watershed, collectively referred to as Limited-Use Areas (LUA), which are outside the hydrographic boundary. The LUA include the Rattlesnake Lake Recreation Area, Landsburg Park, and undeveloped land adjacent to King County's Taylor Mountain Forest.

This procedure is limited to items found within the LUA only. It does not apply to items abandoned within the closed boundaries of the Cedar River Municipal Watershed.

# 3. DEFINITIONS

*Item of value:* Materials and possessions with a monetary value of more than \$25 or of significant personal value, including wallets, cellular telephones, some jewelry, bicycles, cameras, leather jackets, etc.

*Intangible personal property:* Under RCW 63.29, property that is subject to the custody of the state as unclaimed property, including cash in any amount.

# 4. PROCEDURE

## A. Handling Items of Value

- 1) Items of value found in the Rattlesnake Lake Recreation Area or the Cedar River Watershed Education Center should be brought to the Education Center Front Desk and a Found Property form filled out (see appendix). Items of value will be put in the Education Center lost-and-found lockbox or, for larger items, in the locked clothes cabinet until they are turned over to the King County Sheriff, along with the Found

Property form. Items of value found at Landsburg Park or Taylor Mountain Forest should be brought to the Education Center or given to Watershed Protection staff. Any illegal or dangerous items (e.g., guns or other weapons) or extremely valuable items should be transferred to Watershed Protection staff.

- 2) Property cannot be claimed by a City employee who found or acquired the property while acting within the course of employment.
- 3) When first opening a found wallet or purse to determine ownership or contents, whenever possible, a second staff person should be present. The wallet or purse should be tagged with date, location, and contents. Both staff persons should sign the tag.
- 4) When the probable owner of found property is known and likely still on site, call the owner on a public address system, if available, to a designated location. Do not indicate the reason when paging.
- 5) If finder of the item expresses an interest in claiming the item if not claimed by the owner, indicate the finder's contact information on the Found Property form. The found item should be turned over to the King County Sheriff within 7 days. Finders should be directed to contact the sheriff's office to pursue a claim.
- 6) All other items of value will be turned over to the King County Sheriff within 30 days.
- 7) To turn over property to the King County Sheriff, call 1-800-344-4080. Indicate that the pickup is not urgent. When property is a dangerous item (e.g., guns or other weapons) or extremely valuable (e.g., a large amount of cash), call immediately and indicate urgency of pickup and nature of the item.

#### **B. Handling Cash or Other Intangible Personal Property**

- 1) When cash is turned in, place cash in an envelope and label as "lost cash." Complete a Found Property form and place inside the envelope. Date outside of envelope and note amount. Place envelope in safe at the Education Center.
- 2) If finder asks to keep the cash, staff will turn the cash over to the King County Sheriff's Office within 7 days. Finder should be directed to contact the sheriff's office to pursue a claim.
- 3) If finder does not ask to keep the cash, it will be deposited into the City of Seattle account within 7 days. A note of explanation will accompany the deposit record when submitting to SPU Accounting.
- 4) SPU Accounting will assume responsibility for transferring funds to Washington State Department of Revenue's Unclaimed Property Division.

#### **C. Handling Nonvaluable Items**

- 1) Nonvaluable items consist of personal effects that include most used clothing, such as shoes, swimsuits, sweatshirts, jackets, sports gear, towels, etc.
- 2) Clothing items will be placed in a storage area away from unsupervised public access.
- 3) For health reasons, items of a personal nature should be disposed of promptly and not placed in the lost-and-found storage. This includes hair brushes, combs, underwear, make-up, food, etc. Baby bottles should be emptied, rinsed, and placed in lost-and-found storage.
- 4) Wet and muddy items may be disposed of in the garbage without allowing for the 30-day claim period.
- 5) To assist with matching owner to lost property, when possible, found items may be tagged with date and location where found.
- 6) After 30 days, lost-and-found items may be donated to a nonprofit organization or properly disposed.

#### **D. Claiming Lost-and-Found Items**

- 1) Ask the owner to describe carefully the lost property. A staff member should oversee the selection by accompanying owner to the lost-and-found area or presenting the items which match the description.
- 2) When items of value are claimed, the owner must sign the Found Property form which is then retained by the Facilities Coordinator at the Education Center.
- 3) Lost-and-found items may be identified or held over the phone. If a person calls with a request, obtain a complete description, and based on the description provided, determine if the item has been turned in. When identified, immediately tag item with owner's name and phone number and date identified. Inform owner that the item should be picked up immediately or otherwise it will be disposed of in 30 days.
- 4) Lost-and-found items are not to be loaned or given to anyone except the owner.

#### **5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. The Cedar River Watershed Education Center Facility Coordinator is responsible for implementing the procedures described herein.
- B. Supervisors are required to ensure that all Watershed Services Division staff understand and follow this procedure.
- C. SPU Accounts Receivable staff should accept and process intangible personal property (cash) and transmit to the Washington State Department of Revenue.

#### **6. AUTHORITY/REFERENCES**

- RCW 63.21, Lost and found property.
- RCW 63.29, Uniform unclaimed property act.
- WTR-650.2, Found Property Form